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COPY NO. 19

PSB D-42  
April 3, 1953

PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGY BOARD  
Washington 25, D. C.

SUGGESTED GUIDANCE FOR CONDUCT OF NEGOTIATIONS FOR  
THE EXCHANGE OF SICK AND WOUNDED  
FROM VIEWPOINT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PROPAGANDA PROBLEMS INVOLVED

(FOR BOARD APPROVAL)

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SUGGESTED GUIDANCE FOR CONDUCT OF NEGOTIATIONS FOR  
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I.

QUESTION

What is major U. S. objective regarding the return of sick and wounded prisoners of war?

ANSWER

The major consideration is our wish to secure the earliest return of the maximum number of UN prisoners, and that the course of negotiations establish precedents which would facilitate rather than prejudice the wider armistice negotiations to follow.

II.

QUESTION

What is the U. S. position regarding the duration of negotiation for the return of the sick and wounded prisoners of war?

ANSWER

Former experience in negotiations with the Communists should be borne in mind and before renewing discussions a deadline should be established to include the discussions for arrangements and the actual delivery of the prisoners at Panmunjom. This will determine their sincerity and limit their attempts to use the discussions for purely propaganda purposes.

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III.

QUESTION

What is the U. S. position regarding the numbers of sick and wounded returned?

ANSWER

If the Communists proffer a list, particularly a small one, and resist suggestions that there be any independent verification, the presumption is that they are entering the negotiations as a bargaining deal, a political or propaganda gambit; that they are probably intent on giving the appearance of peaceful intentions and normal international behaviour while withholding as much of the substance as possible. In this case it is suggested that CINUNC not (repeat not) reveal the number of sick and wounded in our hands, and that public discussion and speculation on this subject be discouraged.

We should await or maneuver the Communists into making the first move on numbers. If as above, we should counter with a similarly small list and suggest that both sides re-examine the situation to see if some have been overlooked. Before determining what "small number" we are ready to exchange, thought should be given to the question of whether the ratio between the Communists' and our figures will later be used as a precedent by the Communists on the question of total number of prisoners to be exchanged at the cessation of hostilities. Throughout, we should indicate our willingness to have the actual numbers of sick and wounded on both sides determined by an independent body. If a stalemate on small numbers arrives, we should press for acceptance of an independent body's findings.

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IV.

QUESTION

What would be the U. S. position if the Communists propose or respond to our proposals for verification by I.C.R.C. or other neutral bodies?

ANSWER

We should accept this proposal or agreement on its face and proceed to agreement on what body will survey camps on both sides. Our attitude should be that we welcome this first demonstration that the Communists have at last come to their senses and are beginning to act like normal international entities in accordance with accepted international law.

V.

QUESTION

What should be the attitude of the U. S. if the Communists refer to the applicability of the Geneva Convention?

ANSWER

Chou and Molotov have both cited the Convention in their statements. If we estimate that this is an indication of a Communist resolve to follow through and establish a reputation for accepted international behaviour for the time being, it would probably be wise for us to make frequent mention at the conference table of their belated but welcome compliance with normal international standards and the Convention. Publicly our attitude should be more reserved: "A good first step; will there be another?"

If the indications are that this pointed reference to the Geneva Convention has been made with a view to getting these negotiations into the Convention framework in order to be able to commit us to their interpretation of the Convention regarding forcible repatriation in the later

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talks on the whole prisoner-of-war problem, our negotiators will, of course, endeavor to avoid the trap. (A clue may exist in the apparent Communist effort to tie the two questions - sick and wounded with whole prisoner-of-war question - together. But we must not depart from our basic position that only after the entire process of exchanging sick and wounded prisoners can we take up broader negotiations.) In these circumstances, it would probably be wisest to insist privately at the conference table, and publicly, that the two questions and sets of negotiations are quite unrelated. This could be done by pointing out that the Convention assumes that exchange of sick and wounded will normally automatically take place during hostilities; that no special agreement or negotiation such as the present one is contemplated nor normally necessary.

VI.

QUESTION

As the Geneva Convention provides sick or wounded may not be exchanged against their will, what will be the U. S. position if the Communists announce that they have X number of sick and wounded that refuse to be repatriated?

ANSWER

If the Communists do not bring up the question of refusal, the sick and wounded who refuse repatriation should never be included in any roster or list that our delegates use or advance. We simply regard them as being outside the purview of the negotiations. If the Communists announce that there are some, or a definite number, of ours who refuse repatriation, our negotiators can confer and "discover" that we, too, have some, or a definite number, who also refuse. Since it is certainly true, the proportion in our hands who refuse should be markedly greater than

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the proportion in theirs. If there seems to be a disposition on their part to make something of a success of the transaction, and the number they "hold out" not too large, we could, at this point, suggest that the field be confined to sick and wounded who want to be exchanged, and that those who refuse be, for purposes of the present negotiation, simply considered as relegated to the status of prisoners of war along with the larger numbers who must be dealt with later.

Alternatively, if they threaten to announce they hold some who refuse to be repatriated, we might cite Chou's statement that they do not recognize our assertion on the subject regarding those we hold, and that they must grant us the same privilege of not recognizing the validity of their statement. This might open the way for another suggestion for independent verification and agreed mutual compliance with the Geneva Convention by both sides on this point, both reserving their positions regarding the validity of the other's claims. If they attempt to substantiate their assertion by statements or messages from our prisoners which they are ready to make public, we could point out that this is conclusive proof that all Communist "peace" moves are fakes, and that this matter leads directly to the heart of the fundamental conflict between Communism and mankind, since we have evidence that such documents are the product of the state's tampering with and constraining the mind and soul of man to its own purposes. This, no free man in the world will regard with anything but horror. Hence, to introduce this at this point is a clear declaration of irreconcilability, in effect a notification of a Communist decision to enslave the world. We point out it is within our power to bring this home to the world, and we will proceed to do so.

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